

Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

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Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

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“Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past”



Railroad & Transportation Museum Opens In Nevada City



Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGRR) Engine #5 inside the newly opened Transportation Museum (above). A 1901 Jeffery Steam Automobile (top right) – Nevada County's first car – invented by Richard Edgar Jeffery. A history of Grass Valley's aeronautical pioneer, Lyman Gilmore, Jr. (bottom right).

Hard Work and Commitment Pay Off –

The Grand Opening of the *Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad and Transportation Museum* on May 17 and 18 was a gala event with an estimated 500 visitors, volunteers, city and county officials, and media in attendance.

The museum was the dream of a group dedicated to preserving local transportation history. In 1983 they founded the Transportation Museum Division of the Nevada County Historical Society. Through their tireless efforts, and generous donations from numerous businesses and organizations in the County (including \$392,161 from a Federal Grant obtained through the Nevada County Transportation Commission), a 4,000 sq. ft. replica of the

Nevada City Depot building was constructed on two acres of land donated by the Northern Queen Inn, Hooper & Weaver, and TDK Inc. A 2,160 sq. ft. shop and restoration building was built behind the museum where volunteers restore equipment for future exhibits.

The Transportation Museum is located at #5 Kidder Court in Nevada City. Admission is free and donations are welcome. Summer hours are Friday–Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Museum is closed Wednesday and Thursday. (See pg. 2 & 3)

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Transportation Museum



Nick Rohrman & Dick Marundee (top 2 photos) are shown restoring a baggage cart. Al Dittmann is putting finishing touches on the box car (above right). Mike Flaherty is at work next to the box car (middle left). Museum Director John Christensen, in uniform, is pictured with Museum Curator Brian Blair (middle right). Uniformed docent, Theodore Johnson (bottom left) sits waiting to take the next visitors on tour.



Volunteers Preserving History

What does it take to create a Transportation Museum?

Some might say land – money – memorabilia – community backing. All of these factors come into play, but perhaps the #1 criteria is a dedicated group of volunteers with a “passion” for the project. None of the other elements would come together without some key players committed to making things happen. Add to that a work ethic of doing whatever it takes to get the job done and a mindset to leave a piece of themselves behind in the community for future generations to enjoy, and there you have it.

John Christensen, Museum Director and current Chairman of the Transportation Museum Division of the Nevada County Historical Society (NCHS), is one of those key players. His commitment to the vision conceived in 1983, along with NCHS past-president Madellyn Helling, and Cliff

Sommerstom, brought about a reality for the community to enjoy for years to come.

The Transportation Museum welcomes anyone interested in volunteering their time to further the preservation of transportation history in Nevada County. The Museum website states: “We will be having track crew (gandy dancer) parties on Saturdays for those of you who want to learn how to lay rail and put in switches. Your contribution will always be physically evident with this work.” They also state there are numerous pieces of railroad equipment needing maintenance or restoration, for those wanting to learn how narrow gauge cars were constructed. Volunteer docents are also needed. For further information, call the Transportation Museum at 470-0902 or visit their website at www.ncngrrmuseum.org.

(Story continues on page 3)

“I want to know that my efforts made a difference in the community, so I can leave a piece of myself behind for future generations to enjoy.” Dick Marundee

Transportation Museum



Back of Transportation Museum showing the rails needed to move rolling stock from the restoration shop to exhibit areas.

Federal TEA Dollars Help Fund the Transportation Museum

The Nevada County Transportation Commission was able to help in the funding of the Transportation Museum by acquiring a Federal Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) grant in the amount of \$392,161. TEA funds are to be used for transportation-related capital improvement projects that take creative actions to integrate transportation into our communities.

Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad

The Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGRR) is the featured display in the Transportation Museum. Historic Engine No. 5 is the centerpiece in the museum/depot, as well as posters depicting the engine’s 45-year Hollywood experience of some 22 western movies and numerous television appearances.

The railroad was built by John F. Kidder and operated from 1876 to 1942, linking the rich mining districts of western Nevada County with the Central Pacific’s trans-continental railroad in Colfax. Trains ran between Colfax, Grass Valley, and Nevada City and hauled more than \$200 million worth of gold, in addition to thousands of passengers, tons of machinery and essential supplies to the thriving county. Kidder’s widow, Sara, later became the world’s first woman railroad president and was responsible for the acclaimed high steel Bear River Bridge. **NCTC**



John and Sara Kidder

Upcoming NCTC Meetings

The next two meetings of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, June 18, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA

**** There will be no NCTC Meeting in July. ****

Wednesday, August 20, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 E. Main Street, Grass Valley, CA

SR 49 Groundbreaking

Bear River Bridge to Wolf/Combie Road Widening Project Officially Begins

NCTC Commissioners Josh Susman, Kerry Arnett, and Chet Krage joined Caltrans District 3 Director Jody Loneran, Nevada County Supervisor Sue Horne, and Ed Sylvester of SCO Planning & Engineering, Inc. for the official groundbreaking ceremony of the Bear River Bridge to Wolf/Combie Road widening project. Ed Sylvester was on the California Transportation Commission (CTC) when the funds were approved for this project.

Enhancements planned on the Bear River Bridge, for the visual pleasure of travelers along SR 49, include a stone look on the base and pedestals, with a textured concrete beam stained to give a wood appearance. A gateway monument for Nevada County is also in the planning stages and will be located near the bridge site as you enter south Nevada County on SR 49.

Caltrans indicates the work to widen this section is slated to have four lanes open to traffic, including the bridge, by the end of Fall 2003. Final pavement overlays will be completed by Fall 2004. No traffic interfering work is expected. **NCTC**



Left to right: Chet Krage, Ed Sylvester, Sue Horne, Jody Loneran, Kerry Arnett, and Josh Susman join in the groundbreaking festivities.

Transit Planning Update

In January of 2002, the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) funded the update of the Five-Year Transit Development Plans (TDP) for both western and eastern Nevada County. These studies will guide the operations of transit services over the planned period and analyze a wide range of service, capital, management, and financial alternatives.

The completion of the western Nevada County Transit Development Plan was delayed to allow the consultant to conduct two additional studies requested by the Transportation Commission. These studies are: *Gold Country Telecare Efficiency Zone Study* and *Gold Country Stage Fare Revision Impact Study*.

The two additional studies have been completed and incorporated into the revised western Nevada County TDP draft report, which will be presented to the NCTC at their June 18th meeting for review and comment.

The eastern Nevada County TDP was also delayed due to an unexpected change in the contractor providing transit services for the Town of Truckee. A new contractor, Aztec Transportation, was awarded the contract in May and began operating the service June 1st. Staff from NCTC and the Town of Truckee are currently working with the consultants to address any revisions this change may require. The revised eastern Nevada County TDP draft report will then be presented to the Truckee Town Council and NCTC for their review and comment. **NCTC**